

Happy Thanksgiving!

The Eau Claire Lakes Area provides us so much joy throughout the year. At this time of thanksgiving, Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area (FOECLA) would like to express our gratitude to all the dedicated volunteers who generously give their time and lend their expertise, making a meaningful impact in our lake community.

While there are too many volunteers to name and thank individually, we asked a few of them to tell us *in their own words* what inspires them to give their time and talent in support of FOECLA's mission to protect, preserve, and improve the environment.

We hope hearing from these volunteers will encourage more of our members to respond to opportunities for volunteering in 2024. Thank you all!



Nancy and Linda

Linda Mackley and Nancy Walsh

In addition to participating in FOECLA's Adopt-a-Highway clean-up and volunteering with [LEEP](#), our Lake Ecology Education Program, Linda Mackley and Nancy Walsh manage the hospitality offered at our [annual meeting](#) every summer. They do the planning and shopping, they set-up the snacks, clean-up, and make the coffee! They also help get the word out about the meeting and the all-ages educational program which follows, posting flyers in Barnes, Hayward, Gordon, and Cable.

"We appreciate the FOECLA mission and the programs they support. The annual meeting is a great opportunity to spend time with others with similar values. We are happy to help get the word out so that people can enjoy an interesting learning experience. And who doesn't like to provide treats?!"

Ingemar Ekstrom

We reached out to Ingemar Ekstrom, FOECLA Past President, about the importance of volunteering as a [Shoreline Monitor](#). Shoreline Monitors are often the first to spot Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in area lakes and rivers. Many more volunteers are needed and it's something anyone can do. Training is available each spring and summer.

"The first time I came to "the lake" was in 1950. I was 15 years old at that time and now I am 88. So, for 73 years I have watched and experienced many changes in the three lakes our property has access to Sandbar, Tomahawk, and Turtle Lake. Now for the past several years I have been a Shoreline Monitor for the town's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Committee."

"If you are interested in being a Shoreline Monitor on one of our lakes it's easy! A Shoreline Monitor watches for any foreign aquatic plant that may appear in one of our lakes in the course of their normal activities such as viewing the bottom of the lake while on your dock or walking along the shoreline. Observations can also be done while kayaking, paddle boarding, canoeing, or moving slowly with your pontoon boat."



Jeri McGinley with Douglas County AIS Coordinator Zach Stewart next to the new AIS sign at Mooney Bay's public boat landing. FOECLA worked with Douglas County to obtain and install the sign.

Jeri McGinley

Jeri McGinley is a former FOECLA Treasurer. She now volunteers on FOECLA's Water Quality Committee.

Qualified organizations, like FOECLA, can apply for [Wisconsin DNR Healthy Lakes & Rivers grants](#) on behalf of shoreland property owners. Jeri handles the paperwork needed for FOECLA to participate in this program.

"I like being part of a team focused on making our lakes healthier and it's very satisfying to use my skills to help the DNR Healthy Lakes & Rivers Program thrive in our area. Seeing the finished projects and the pleased property owners never gets old!"

Tina Moseley

Tina Moseley is always on the lookout for AIS! She has volunteered as a Shoreline Monitor and Boat Landing Monitor. This year she's excited about her experiences as a deck hand on the [Barnes Aquatic Invasive Species Suction \(BAISS\) pontoon boat](#).

"My family has been on Upper for 75 years now and we cherish all the lakes around here. We are so lucky to have these beautiful lakes, but if we take them for granted and don't take care of them, they won't be beautiful forever. This summer when they were looking for volunteers for the BAISS boat I jumped at the chance to help. It truly is an amazing piece of equipment!!!! I was so impressed with how well the process worked. It was always exciting to have a bunch of weeds come through the tube! Each time I was on it I learned something and knew that every weed we could suck out would help our lakes."



Water Chemistry Volunteers

We are very fortunate to have a veteran team of [water chemistry volunteers](#) collecting water samples and working the samples up for analysis at the State Lab of Hygiene in Madison. These volunteers have collectively totaled 86 years of monitoring the water quality on the following lakes: Bob Cochrane - Upper Eau Claire Lake, Tom Brovold - Robinson Lake, Jim Johnson - Bony Lake, Lee Wiesner - Middle Eau Claire Lake, and Mike and Jean Gottwald - Lower Eau Claire Lake.